

Motts Run Orienteering Course

Important Information

WELCOME!

Learning to use a map and compass together can be a challenge and also a thrilling experience. Our orienteering course seeks to be very user friendly, and if done successfully will provide great exercise and fun for the entire family.

This course was designed and built as an Eagle Scout Service Project by Zach Bailey (Troop 179) in the summer of 2003. It is patterned after the popular (and much larger) course at Prince William Forest Park. The project involved numerous trips on site with a GPS unit, developing corresponding maps and course layout, and finally construction of the orange topped posts which mark the course waypoints.

LOCATION

The Motts Run Orienteering Course is located at Motts Run Reservoir, located on River Road in Spotsylvania County, Virginia, but owned and operated by the City of Fredericksburg.

PARK HOURS: 6am-Dusk, April through October. Park Phone: 540-786-8989.

Please check in at concession stand. If park is closed, you may park at gate (do not block gate!) and walk in, but you do so AT YOUR OWN RISK!

Directions: Route 3 west from Fredb'g. Approx. 1 mile west of I-95, turn RIGHT onto Bragg Road (at Giant food store). Continue 1 mile. Turn LEFT onto River Rd. Park is 2.4 miles on LEFT. (You will wind along the Rappahannock River, past Clore Bros. Canoe Outfitters, then up steep hill. Park is another ½ mi. past crest of hill). Follow gravel road into park.

Course begins near the Motts Run Nature Center. Look for the orange-topped post behind port-a john, approx. 100 feet from center. This is STARTING POINT for all maps.

COURSE USE (READ THIS!)

The course is designed for individuals or groups. The terrain is HILLY throughout---this is *NOT an easy stroll in the woods!* Maps and compasses are available for checkout from the Motts Run Nature Center, open on weekends from 12-5pm, April through October. You may also print out maps from this website.

- If purchasing a compass, a Silva Starter Compass works very well. (under \$10)
- PRACTICE using compass BEFORE beginning course or bring experienced person
- If your compass can be preset for declination, know how to use it (won't apply to most)
- **Each course map STARTS and ENDS at POST #900!!**
- Take all bearings while standing AT the posts (not a distance away)
- Always hike with a partner, especially if this is your first time on course
- Look at BACK of MAP for specifics on using map and compass together
- Use SCALE on map to get an idea of distances between posts
- Do the contours of land match the contours on map?! (This can be helpful)
- Bring plenty of water
- Be on the lookout for underground yellow jacket nests from May-Frost. (carry medication if allergic)
- **IF LOST:**
 - Hike **DOWNHILL** (SW) toward WATER and trail along shore
 - OR, Hike **UPHILL** (NE) toward ROAD and walk to entrance

Please REPORT course use or questions to Linda Bailey, Nature Specialist, 540-372-1086, ext. 213 or lbailey@fredericksburgva.gov.

COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

Course Name	Description	Terrain	Notes
The Rounds	A good beginner loop which circles Turkey Ridge Trail.	MODERATE	*Fallen trees b/w stops 4 & 5
The Four Corners	A good beginner course	MODERATE	*Fallen trees b/w stops 2 & 3
The Horn	A good intermediate loop with long scenic stretches.	MODERATELY STRENUOUS	
The Hook	A difficult beginning, but otherwise gently sloping and scenic.	MODERATELY STRENUOUS	
The Grand Loop	This course takes in all posts.	MODERATELY STRENUOUS	*Fallen trees b/w stops 10 & 11
The Figure Eight	A challenging figure-eight with a long end stretch. Check bearing accuracy.	STRENUOUS	*Fallen trees b/w stops 2 & 3
The Trio	This course has two very long stretches with a large margin of error. Make certain that your compass bearing is accurate. Check distances and VERIFY post numbers!	VERY STRENUOUS	
The Gully	This course is relatively short, but crosses a major draw and ridge.	VERY STRENUOUS	

***NOTE:** Fallen trees from Hurricane Isabel in September, 2003, pose some additional challenge to these otherwise moderate routes. If you need to get a bearing beyond a pile of downed trees, use the TOP of a specific tree for your landmark, then hike AROUND the debris!